

This first edition of the NJ GEAR UPdate is published by the NJ GEAR UP State Project, which is administered by the NJ Commission on Higher Education. It is designed to provide information to NJ GEAR UP friends, partners, and supporters about the progress and impact of NJ GEAR UP.

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NJ GEAR UPdate

Issue 1

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After-school Programs, Tutoring, and Saturday Classes in Full Swing



A critical support service offered by NJ GEAR UP is the after-school program, which runs during the school year. Typically, after-school programs offer tutoring that is available to the entire student body at a GEAR UP target school. At some programs, tutoring is also offered in the classrooms during school hours. Other services, such as mentoring, counseling, and college application assistance, may also be available. Programs offer tutoring at their after-school and during-school programs as shown in the table. Please call the local campus program [see page 6] in your city with questions.

Students enrolled in NJ GEAR UP should now also be attending program classes on Saturdays. These classes take place at the four NJ GEAR UP campus locations and offer support

in fundamental academic subjects, as well as a variety of electives. Students must attend Saturday classes to

continue to be enrolled in GEAR UP! Call the GEAR UP campus program in your area with questions.

NJ GEAR UP IN-SCHOOL PROGRAMS

LOCATION	SCHEDULE
Newark	
Ridge Street ES	Mon.-Thurs., 3-5 PM
Hawkins Street ES	Mon.-Thurs., 9-3 PM
East Side HS	Mon.-Thurs., 9-3 PM
Barringer HS	Mon.-Thurs., 3-5 PM
NJIT/UMDNJ/Rutgers-Newark Campuses	Tues.-Thurs., 3-5:30 PM
Camden	
Rowan University, Camden Campus	Mon-Thurs., 3-7 PM
R.T. Cream ES	Tues.-Wed., 3-5 PM
Woodrow Wilson HS SAT Prep	Tues.-Wed., 3-5 PM
Camden HS SAT Prep	Tues.-Wed., 3-5 PM
Jersey City	
New Jersey City University Campus	Wed-Thurs., 3-6 PM
PS #40	Mon.-Thurs., 3-4:30 PM
PS #41	Mon.-Thurs., 3-4:30 PM
Trenton	
Mercer County Community College, James Kerney Campus	Tues.-Thurs., 3-6 PM
Joyce Kilmer ES	Tues.-Thurs., 3-6 PM
Hedgepeth-Williams MS	Tues.-Thurs., 3-6 PM
Donnelly Homes (across from Martin Luther King, Jr. MS)	Tues.-Thurs., 3-6 PM
Trenton HS	Tues.-Thurs., 3-5 PM
Trenton HS West	Tues.-Thurs., 3-5 PM

GEPA Scores and GPAs on the Rise

NJ GEAR UP students are benefiting from the extra support they receive to score well on the Grade Eight Performance Assessment (GEPA). In the most recent GEAR UP Annual Performance Report, the percentage of students in Newark, Camden, and Trenton* who passed all three sections of the GEPA rose from 11.1% in 2000 to 20% in 2003.

While these three cities are reporting gains in GEPA performance, the increased scores of GEAR UP students in Trenton are the most impressive and are seen across subject areas. This is likely the result of the GEPA Academy that Project SMILE/GEAR UP has pilot-tested in collaboration with its target schools for the last three years. In the Trenton target schools, the number of NJ

GEAR UP students scoring proficient or advanced proficient in language arts literacy was 12.2% higher than the target school population; in mathematics, 9.8% higher; and in science, 21% higher. The CHAMP/GEAR UP program at Rowan University in Camden and the Consortium for Pre-College Education in Greater Newark have also reported gains (see chart below).

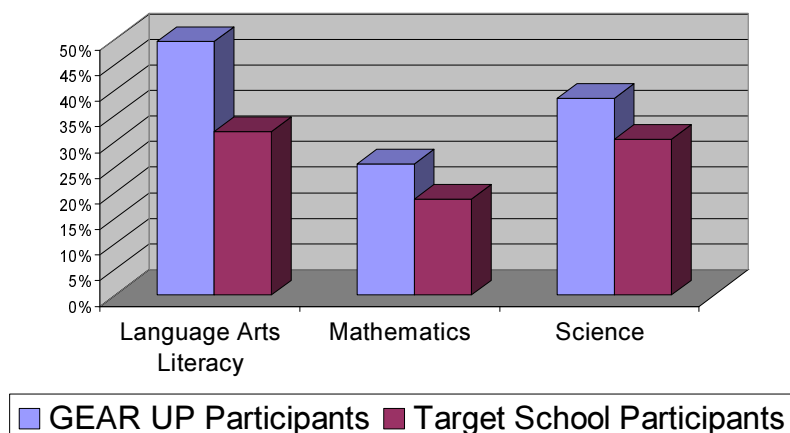
Modest gains are also being realized in Grade Point Average (GPA). The overall GPA reported for GEAR UP students in 2003-2004 was 2.61, as compared to the GPA in 2000 of 2.42.

**Scores from Jersey City Schools were not available.*



...the percentage of students in Newark, Camden, and Trenton who passed all three sections of the GEPA rose from 11.1% in 2000 to 20% in 2003.

Percent of NJ GEAR UP Students Scoring Proficient on the 2003 GEPA Compared to Students in the Target Schools



Canoeing, Climbing, Camping: Who Knew Learning Could be This Much Fun?



On September 25-26, over 40 NJ GEAR UP students and their mentors participated in the Second Annual Mentor-Protégé Leadership Retreat at Princeton-Blairstown Center in Blairstown, New Jersey. These students and staff from Camden, Newark, and

Trenton programs and schools took part in creative problem-solving exercises, high-ropes courses, rappelling, canoeing, backpacking, nature walks, and camping. They were split into teams so they had to meet and learn from students from other cities. The weekend helped everyone learn self-confidence, trust, and leadership and conflict resolution skills. The Mentor-Protégé Leadership Retreat is an annual kickoff event for partner programs in the NJ GEAR UP State Project. College and graduate students serve as mentors for NJ GEAR UP students.

If you would like information on how to become a NJ GEAR UP mentor, you can visit www.nj.gov/highereducation/gearupmentor.htm to complete an application online, or call a local campus program.



Financial Aid Workshops Available for ALL NJ GEAR UP Target Schools



One of the key services available to every NJ GEAR UP target school is information about financial aid. The project's partner in this initiative is the Higher Education Student Assistance Authority (HESAA); they have developed presentations for both middle and high school audiences and

can present to students and parents; teachers and guidance counselors can also participate. The topics available are "Why Go to College?" (for middle school students) and "Financial Aid 101" (for high school students).

"Why Go to College" helps students understand the importance of higher education along with basic financial aid principles. "Financial Aid 101" defines financial aid, describes the process of applying for it, and provides a

review of federal and New Jersey aid programs. Contact Ms. Danette Edwards directly at dedwards@hesaa.org to schedule a presentation or site visit for individual student questions.



College-Going and Persistence Rates, NJ GEAR UP, 2000-2004



NJ GEAR UP students have enrolled in college at a rate of 81%...as compared with the national average for low income students of 44%

A primary indicator of the success of NJ GEAR UP is the rate at which its graduates enroll in college. Although the project has only been in existence for five years, some college-going data are available. Overall, the first five cohorts of NJ GEAR UP students have enrolled in college at a rate of 81%...as compared with the national average for low-income students of 43.8%.

About 80% of NJ GEAR UP students who attended college in New Jersey persisted to their second year; this compares very favorably with the rate of 73.4% for all New Jersey students still in college by the sophomore year*. By March 2005, the project should be able to report initial college graduation rates and number of degrees earned.

* The National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education, Policy Alert, "Educational Pipeline Success Rate"

Professional Development for Teachers...FREE from NJ GEAR UP

This year, the NJ GEAR UP State Project is offering professional development workshops at the 19 target schools--on topics chosen by the schools and at convenient times for teachers. This service is offered free of charge from NJ GEAR UP. Several schools have already arranged for speakers to come to their schools on in-service days

or afternoons to educate teachers and guidance counselors on essential educational topics. Schools must be willing to assign a contact person to work with NJ GEAR UP on workshop scheduling and logistics. If you have not yet ordered professional development workshop(s) for your school, please send an email to Kilpatry

Cuesta, State Coordinator of NJ GEAR UP at kcuesta@che.state.nj.us. Include your name, title, school, and phone number; Kilpatry will send you the professional development survey to complete. Once you complete and return the survey, the State Coordinator will find a speaker for you.

School	Topic	Date
Trenton Central HS	Classroom Management	Dec. 13
Hedgepeth Williams MS	Involving parents in their child's educational experience	Dec. 17 Jan. 21
Joyce Kilmer ES	Classroom Management	Feb. 22
Luis Munoz Rivera ES	Motivating the difficult student	May 13
Hawkins Street ES	Managing the Elementary School Classroom	Oct. 20
PS #40	Cooperative Learning	Nov. 18
Cooper's Poynt ES	NJ-ASK (3rd- and 4th-grade math) and GEPA (7th- and 8th-grade math) and GEPA (5th- and 6th-grade math)	Oct. 8 Nov. 10
R.T. Cream ES	Applying math core curriculum content standards in the classroom	Nov. 10

Upcoming Events

Spring 2005 Reapplication for NJ GEAR UP/School District Meetings:

The NJ GEAR UP State Project is in its sixth year of implementation. In spring 2005, we will reapply for another cycle of funding. A new cycle means new possibilities and new challenges for all partners of the project—as well as a chance to revisit old issues with attitudes of creative problem-solving. As you know, NJ GEAR UP offers students unprecedented levels of precollege academic services—over two hundred hours a year—from seventh grade until they graduate from high school. It is free to students, parents, and teachers. And it makes an impact. The directors and staff of your local campus programs should be working with you right now to schedule a meeting during November to discuss how NJ GEAR UP is

working in your district. Invitees include district superintendents and assistant superintendents; district representatives responsible for data, curriculum, professional development, and guidance; target school principals, vice principals, and counselors; NJ GEAR UP program staff; and Commission on Higher Education staff. Contact your local campus program [see page 6] to get the details.

College Bound/NJ GEAR UP Best Practices Forum II

The purpose of this event is to bring together professionals in the field of precollege education in New Jersey so they can share effective strategies for increasing students' ability to take rigorous courses, graduate from high school, and succeed in college. During this two-day event, directors and staff of the ten College Bound/NJ GEAR UP programs will each offer an

explanation of an initiative that they consider a "best practice" for preparing students to succeed after high school. The event will also feature a panel presentation by GEAR UP partnerships on the topic "Best Practices in Schools: What Really Works?"

Wed.-Thurs., Dec. 8-9, 2004
Marriott Hotel, Trenton, NJ

College Bound Student Leadership Retreat for NJ GEAR UP and College Bound 11th-12th grade students:

Sat.-Sun., Dec. 11-12, 2004

Statewide Knowledge Bowl for NJ GEAR UP and College Bound 7th-10th grade students: April 2005

Statewide Awards Ceremony, NJ GEAR UP and College Bound: May 2005

Call For Resources

As we plan for the GEAR UP funding reapplication in spring 2005, we would appreciate information from you about any resources that will help us make the case that there is still a need for GEAR UP funding in your cities, districts, schools, communities, and families. We already have access to major national and some New Jersey sources of information, such as

census data, Measuring Up 2004, Kids Count 2004, the NJ Report Card, NJEA, and The Condition of Education reports. However, if you come across data that stress your community's, school's, or district's specific need in certain areas that can be met by NJ GEAR UP, please forward it to Michelle Johnson, NJ GEAR UP State Project Director, at mjohnson@che.state.nj.us, or

mail it to NJ Commission on Higher Education, P.O. Box 542, Trenton, NJ 08625-0542. Thank you.

**NJ Commission on
Higher Education
and
NJ GEAR UP
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For questions about this
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Fax: (609) 292-7225
mjohnson@che.state.nj.us

Check out our
website at :
[www.nj.gov/
highereducation/
gearup.htm](http://www.nj.gov/highereducation/gearup.htm)

Special Thanks
NJ Commission on
Higher Education
NJ GEAR UP schools
Sponsoring Institutions
US Department
of Education
NJ Department
of Education
Educational Opportunity
Fund Program
Higher Education Student
Assistance Authority



Helpful Links

Find a precollege program in NJ: <http://www.nj.gov/highereducation/precollege2004/index.html>

The National GEAR UP initiative: www.ed.gov/gearup

NJEdge: www.njedge.org

Higher Education Student Assistance Authority: www.hesaa.org

Educational Opportunity Fund: <http://www.state.nj.us/highereducation/eof.htm>



What is GEAR UP?

Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP) is a national initiative to help more students stay in school, study hard, and go to college. Matching grants from the U.S. Department of Education encourage middle and high schools, colleges and universities, community-based organizations, state and local governments, and businesses to work together on behalf of students and families.

In the fall of 1999, the New Jersey Commission on Higher Education received a GEAR UP grant. NJ GEAR UP builds on existing state-funded College Bound programs at Mercer County Community College, New Jersey City University, Rowan University, and the Consortium for Pre-College Education in Greater Newark (New Jersey Institute of Technology, Rutgers University - Newark, and the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey).

Our Partner Schools

Newark

Consortium for
Pre-College
Education in
Greater Newark
(973) 596-5762

- Hawkins Street ES
- Ridge Street ES
- Barringer HS
- East Side HS

Jersey City

College Bound/
GEAR UP
(201) 200-2347

- PS #14
- PS#40
- PS #41
- Lincoln HS
- Henry Snyder HS

Trenton

Project SMILE/GEAR UP
(609) 586-4800, ext. 6578

- Hedgepeth-Williams MS
- Arthur Holland MS
- Luis-Munoz Rivera ES
- Joyce-Kilmer ES
- Martin Luther King, Jr., MS
- Trenton HS
- Trenton HS West

Camden

CHAMP/GEAR UP
(856) 756-5420

- Cooper's Poynt ES
- R.T. Cream ES
- Camden HS
- Woodrow Wilson HS